

### SCHOOL ATHLETICS.

The post-war period of civil rehabilitation offers some of the knottiest problems with which physicians of this generation have had to deal. Two factors contribute to the urgency and difficulty of their solution. One of these factors is the public civil urge for improvement in social, economic and health conditions, an urge which will become irresistible with the addition of the demobilized military to the civil population. The other factor is the necessity for translating our military experience into terms applicable to civil problems following the war. To no post-bellum problem are these two factors more closely related than to the problem of school athletics, and amateur competitive athletics. And to no problem has less attention so far been given, seeking to satisfy the conditions of the two factors just enumerated.

It is unnecessary to review the observations and data of the last decade showing the physical evils of over-training and over-straining induced by competitive school athletics. In his annual report for 1912, Surgeon-General C. F. Stokes, U. S. N., recommended, in view of these evils, that "athletics in the Navy be so regulated as to avoid these deleterious conditions by the prohibition of endurance contests where the ability to win is largely, if not entirely, dependent upon brute force, and that rather the maximum effort be made to develop a symmetrical, normal physique in the many instead of a highly specialized human machine in the few." For the "win at any price" slogan, faculties, trustees, student bodies and alumni were alike and equally responsible. This policy must give way to one which is saner, more modern and more scientific.

The general opinion among medical and military men, that something is wrong with the old system of athletics, is exemplified in the system of physical development developed in the military organizations. The results of this system, whereby every individual receives all-around symmetrical development, are universally beneficial. It remains to re-organize school and college athletics on similar lines. The proved methods of military physical training must be taken over into school and civil life, and similar beneficial results will as certainly follow. The proper function of universal military training, which it is earnestly hoped will be established in the United States at once, is to inculcate discipline, provide proper physical training, both normal and corrective, and to develop a homogeneous national sense which is our strongest bulwark against anarchy and foreign invasion. These great lessons from military experience must not be lost.

The re-organization sadly needed in school and college athletics is epitomized by D. F. Luby<sup>1</sup> as follows: "All branches of athletics must be re-classified on the basis of their effects on the heart and other vital organs, and we must discard the old classification based upon popularity and commercial advantage. In the grammar school the form of athletics in which a boy would be per-

mitted to engage would depend upon his family and personal history, his physical status, height, weight, etc." The same system would follow in high school and college, combining both physical and tactical athletics. "Outside competitions with other schools would be reduced and the competitive idea find its illustration principally in inter-class games. Work in the gymnasium should accompany and parallel the work done in teams and athletic games. Mass competition, such as that in which a class would participate as a whole, is to be encouraged. New feats of prowess should be introduced. There should be walking contests, wall-scaling contests, obstacle racing, hurdling, soccer football, etc. Athletics of to-day must be remolded and their object clearly defined. Athletics can surely have no better purpose than to develop a robust and healthy boy who, though he may not be an interscholastic champion, will nevertheless enter upon his life work with a symmetrical, fully-developed body, capable of resisting disease and of enduring physical strain."

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### EDITORIAL COMMENT.

We need to remind even ourselves that the term "practice of medicine" no longer means "practice of physic." We have here an example of the transference of a name to a developing idea, which idea connotes and includes vastly more than the name applied to it. The "practice of medicine" is a survival which should be supplanted by a name of exact definition and connotation, based on sound generic classification, and suited to the modern scientific idea of the preservation of human health by all methods available.

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The British parliament, in 1915, instituted a board of liquor control, which had also to do with maintaining the efficiency of workers. This board established canteens and eating houses which were comfortable and attractive. The proprietors were paid on a commission basis, a larger rate being allowed on edibles, and no commission allowed on intoxicants. Lower strengths of spirits and beer were legalized. Every effort was made to lower drunkenness, especially at week-ends. The campaign met with marked success.

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There is the best of theoretic and practical evidence establishing masks as perhaps our strongest single weapon in preventing influenza. We know that influenza, like pneumonic plague, is spread by droplet infection, and we know that they both can be prevented by masking. San Francisco's experience demonstrates this conclusively on a large scale. Masking ought to be enforced in every community which desires to eradicate influenza. The mask keeps in the infection in the carrier and ambulant case, and on the other hand excludes infected droplets from the sound person. They are logical, according to our best scientific knowledge. They are practically effective. They ought to be used universally wherever influenza is epidemic.

<sup>1</sup> U. S. Med. Bulletin, Oct., 1918.

In another column will be found an important statement of What Every Disabled Soldier and Sailor Should Know. With demobilization in progress, this information needs the widest circulation. Every physician is urgently requested to help make this information available for all disabled soldiers and sailors, and their families.

The general trend toward lower prices makes it doubly worth while to keep in touch with the advertising pages of the Journal. These pages chronicle the best in medical supplies and institutions, and the busy doctor has the endorsement of the State Medical Society to guide his choice. If you have a location to buy or sell, or anything else to buy or sell, save time and money by putting an ad. in the Journal.

Quarantine is only effective against influenza when absolute. It does not meet the carrier problem or the undiagnosed mild case. It is far less effective than masking, avoidance of public assembly and personal preventive measures, such as abundant fresh air, abundant food, abundant sleep. It ought to be enforced, along with universal masking, as the two together constitute our chief defense against influenza.

The Public Health Committee of the New York Academy of Medicine recommends an amendment to the Sanitary Code making it a misdemeanor to sneeze or cough in public without the mouth and nose adequately covered.

On the basis of experimental work conducted at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Howland and Marriott conclude that tetany is caused by a reduction in the calcium content of the blood below 6. or 7. mg. per 100 cc. The figure varies with different individuals. Symptoms of tetany appear when the blood content of calcium falls to this level, and these symptoms are relieved and prevented by repeated doses of calcium. The calcium deficiency seems to be due to some as yet unknown primary factor and administration of calcium must therefore be constantly maintained for an indefinite period.

In a review by Chaney & Hanna of the safety movement in the iron and steel industries for the decade ending in 1917, issued by the U. S. Department of Labor<sup>1</sup> it is stated that safety men are thoroughly convinced that the use of alcohol is an important factor in causing accidents. The lack of proper statistics on a large scale makes it difficult to estimate the exact extent of this influence. The practically unanimous opinion of as competent a jury as the safety engineers of the country is, however, in itself a weighty argument. The list of industries and plants which forbid the use of alcoholic beverages is rapidly growing. There is no argument in industry favoring booze.

Is it not strange that every nation recognizes the dangers and potential disaster in alcoholic beverages, and yet many persons still insist that education will remedy the alcohol evil. Why not educate people in the dangers of cocaine and morphine, instead of having a Harrison act?

The psychology of war as exemplified in that just ended, shows that in peace-time peoples incline to self-indulgence, become self-centered, selfish, and lose many of their higher ideals. War develops the heroic, the self-sacrificing, lifts people out of themselves and propagates altruism and unselfishness. This it does at a definite price, paid in death, disaster, misery, and suffering. A certain large percentage of this price is paid by innocent persons. Would that we had some vicarious means of securing the great advantages that war brings.

#### THE FOURTH LIBERTY LOAN THE GREATEST SINGLE EVENT IN FINANCIAL HISTORY

The United States Government asked a loan from the people of the country of \$6,000,000,000, an amount unprecedented in all the history of the world. In three weeks' time, in spite of an epidemic of influenza which prevented public meeting and cost the people many millions of dollars in medical bills and lost time, and in spite, too, of the peace rumors that in some instances had a tendency to make the success of the loan seem less vital, some 21,000,000 of the American people offered to the Government \$6,866,416,300. Each Federal Reserve district oversubscribed its quota. Thousands of cities, towns, and communities oversubscribed their quotas. Secretary McAdoo says that the Fourth Liberty Loan is the greatest single event in financial history.

#### IMPROVING CITY MILK SUPPLIES

Sanitary milk control—an important factor in city welfare and a big problem of the city health department—receives personal attention from the Dairy Division of the United States Department of Agriculture. Specialists in sanitary production and handling of milk are usually available, and upon request of the city health departments they are sent to assist in improving the milk supply. This assistance may mean the making of a general survey lasting only a few days or a very intensive inspection lasting two or three months.

During the last year personal aid was given to 36 cities in 14 States. In addition to this, assistance was given the United States Public Health Service by conducting sanitary milk surveys and in improving the milk supply of 15 extra cantonment zones.

All phases of city milk supply are covered. Inspection of dairies, milk plants, and other distributing centers are made; samples of the products are taken and analyzed both chemically and bacteriologically. When necessary, help is given in the installation of laboratories and technique and in the interpretation of the results of chemical and bacterial analyses.

Special meetings may be held among both producers and consumers of milk in order to arouse interest in the local milk supply. Advice in framing ordinances to cover dairy and milk conditions is also offered.

An important feature is the milk contest, in which specialists assist in instituting these contests and act as judges in scoring the product to determine the relative standing of milk producers. These contests encourage rivalry among dairymen and, in consequence, tend to improve the milk supply of a city.

<sup>1</sup> Bulletin U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, p. 234, June, 1918.